

Grant Pfeifer  
Department of Ecology  
4601 N Monroe St  
Spokane, WA 99205

Dear Mr Pfeifer:

24 October 2018

Please find below my comments/input for the EIS scoping mechanism concerning the PAC West Silicon Smelter.

- A. We (the public) have been asked to comment on and propose areas for consideration to an environmental impact study (EIS) of a facility and its process for which we have not received adequate information. I have read and heard several different numbers on the quantity and types of materials necessary to the smelter/manufacture silicon. If PAC West cannot provide a firm level of their requirements for the process, to include transportation needs of raw materials, how can we, as the public, provide an honest evaluation of the environmental impact?
1. Where will PAC West get its supply of drinking water and any water required for the smelting process? If drinking water is to come from the city of Newport, what will be the impact on the water table in the area? If water is used as a coolant during the smelting process, how will the wastewater be disposed? Will it be collected in a container, released into the ground, or released into the local riverway? Will the water be treated prior to its release to negate any pollutants collected during the smelting process? Will the treated water be routinely tested to ensure compliance with pollution requirements?
  2. What kind of raw sewage system is proposed? Will PAC West connect into the Newport or Old Town sewer system, or use a septic system? An estimate of 200 employees utilizing the facilities daily would require a huge septic system and constant monitoring that it is working as designed.
  3. What measures will PAC West use to ensure the ground areas are not littered with wood chips, crystals, and or other foreign debris which are not native to the local area? Any foreign debris could have an impact on both the ground and ground water in the area. For example, weed seeds imbedded in the wood chips (depending on where the chips come from) could introduce weeds not local to the area. Coal products produce coal dust which easily transfers through the air with the wind and it has an oily residue that is extremely difficult to remove from whatever it lands on.
  4. What will be the noise level decibels from the locomotives hauling supplies through the area? What will be the distance from the tracks before the noise is unnoticeable? How many times per day will locomotives traverse the area? Will the increased noise cause distress to the area's wildlife and numerous fowl and result in their transition from the area? How many shifts will PAC West maintain per 24 hours? Will the smelter operate on a 24-hour basis? If so, then the locomotives, trucks, and personal vehicles will traverse the area numerous times per day—all contributing to the noise, diesel and gasoline fumes, and vehicle congestion level for the local area. What will be the noise level generated from the smelter process? The Moses Lake smelter/plant generates a loud, irritating noise, but it appears from pictures there are no businesses or houses in the immediate area. Will the PAC West smelter generate a similar noise? If so, the noise alone would have a huge impact to the local area since both Newport and Old Town will be in the immediate area of the smelter. And what about light pollution from the smelter? As a large industrial plant, I would assume there will be numerous

large spot lights to cover the area during the night for security and safety. Those lights will pollute the night sky and prevent local amateur astronomers from clearly viewing the stars, etc.

5. Will the road to the smelter connect to Washington's Highway 2 and Idaho's Highway 41? Has any planning been considered to reduce the congestion and possible increase of vehicle accidents from vehicles entering and exiting the smelter road from/to those highways?
  6. It was stated there would be acid rain created from the silicon smelter pollutants. Does PAC West have a method to prevent the emitted pollutants from damaging/killing the local trees and plants? The same concern applies to polluting the local water ways which would affect all water recreational activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, hunting, and migrating water fowl. The immitted pollutants will impact the state environmental office personnel because a state inspector should be assigned to monitor the immitted pollutants. That action ensures the company complies with the state law on emission levels. The area water is already contaminated with arsenic. Many of us pay for systems that remove the arsenic from our water. We certainly don't need more arsenic, mercury, lead, or any other heavy metal added to the air which eventually goes to the ground and eventually into the water system!
  7. What health effects will the smelter employees feel due to the immediate, constant exposure of heavy metal particles and acid rain. Will the employees be exposed to the pollutants more so than the population surrounding the smelter simply because of their proximity to the process? Exposure to the pollutants has a probability to increase any damaging health effects, not only for the smelter employees, but for the local surrounding population. Consequently, more health issues result in an increased work load on the local health providers and hospital.
  8. At one time it was stated PAC West would create jobs for the local population—an item that has caused several residents to support the silicon smelter. However, a review of the employee demographics at a silicon producing/sun panel smelter located near Moses Lake showed many of the employees as highly skilled technical workers. This is not the demographics for available work force in the Newport, WA area. Rather, most of the population are engaged in farming, logging, building construction, saw mill or paper mill workers. Therefore, if the local population are not eligible to operate the silicon smelter and workers must be brought in from other areas, where will they be housed? There is already a shortfall of local building contractors and sub-contractors in the area. Therefore, it will be sometime before additional housing can be constructed. If the smelter employees must reside in areas many miles away, it will place additional stress upon the environment because of additional travel on local roads, additional exhaust in the air from car fumes traveling longer distances, etc.
  9. Heavy trucks are not allowed on the roadways during the spring thaw. What alternate plan does the smelter have that would allow continued operations without causing damage to the roadways?
  10. During the summer forest fires when we are under an extreme health advisory because of the smoke, will the silicon smelter shut down operations to prevent the addition of more pollutants into the air?
- B. I was not aware until recently that there was another smelter in the Moses Lake area. The Spokane news station reported that the imposed tariffs were taking a heavy toll on the smelter's business, and over 50 percent of the employees had been laid off, and it might have to close completely soon. It seems that the EIS composed for that smelter would be a good starting place to determine some of the impacts in the Newport area. Additionally, even though the Moses Lake smelter produces solar panels, it is my understanding it starts by producing silicon for those

panels. It seems a logical solution to the economical and environmental issues for PAC West and the owner of the Moses Lake smelter to join in partnership and consolidate the processes.

- C. My husband and I moved from Phoenix, Arizona, last spring after just two years in the area. We had our dream home built and had to sell because both of us ended up with health issues caused by the environment in the area. I am still on medication and will be for another year. We came to this area because the air is healthier; there is less traffic; the peace and quiet; and wildlife abounds. We are in the process of building a home and putting a large amount of money into our property. Unfortunately, we did not find out about the proposed smelter until after we'd purchased our property and started preparing the land for living. From what I've learned so far about the silicon smelter, I honestly cannot believe this plant will have an environmentally or economically good impact on this area. My husband and I are in our sunset years and cannot pick up and move again. After 27 years in the military, we have lived in 17 houses already. This area is our last piece of heaven. I am personally asking you to please do a comprehensive review based on substantial information obtained from PAC West that will ensure this smelter, if approved, does not destroy the area and the life we have built here.

Dawn S. Powers,  
Resident of Newport